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Is It Time For President Trump To Appoint A Special Representative For Cuba? Jared Kushner? A Retired Executive?

The Trump Administration has identified and continues to seek to identify verifiable linkages between the survival of the Nicolas Maduro Administration in Caracas, Venezuela, and its support from the Miguel Diaz-Canel Administration in Havana, Republic of Cuba.

The Trump Administration argues the Republic of Cuba is integral to both preventing and permitting changes in Venezuela. Pressure upon the Republic of Cuba, directly and indirectly, has yet to displace the Maduro Administration.

For the Trump Administration, regardless of a universally-accepted marketable success from its desired process to incur changes in Venezuela, there will remain issues relating to the Republic of Cuba- and resolving those issues may become more challenging absent the Maduro Administration.

If oil exports from Venezuela to the Republic of Cuba were to cease immediately (as Interim President Juan Guaido has proffered with the support of the Trump Administration), there would be an immediate commercial and economic crisis in the Republic of Cuba- where approximately 11 million Republic of Cuba nationals have emotional (and political) connectivity with approximately 2 million individuals of Cuban descent residing in Florida and New Jersey.

Logic would support the appointment of a Special Representative for the Republic of Cuba.

In January 2019, the United States Department of State appointed a United States Special Representative for Venezuela. There is no United States Special Representative for the Republic of Cuba. There needs to be two; not one with two portfolios.

There is a triangulation of interests- United States, Venezuela and Republic of Cuba. Debatable as to the shape of the triangle, but likely an Isosceles with two points nearer to one another and third point an equal distance from the other two points. Venezuela and Republic of Cuba at the base and the United States a significant distance from either one.

Given the extraordinary complexity of the United States-Republic of Cuba relationship, particularly the significance of a domestic political component residing in South Florida, critical to any success will be the credentials of the appointee as Special Representative for the Republic of Cuba.

Most importantly, the Special Representative for the Republic of Cuba should be appointed by The White House and report directly to The Honorable Donald J. Trump, President of the United States, rather than reporting to the United States Department of State.

Reporting to the President will demonstrate to the Republic of Cuba (and Maduro Administration) a seriousness for direct discussions to resolve issues, particularly intractable ones. The Diaz-Canel

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Administration may reject a meaningful overture. If so, the Trump Administration will believe it further unleashed to target the Republic of Cuba.

Mr. Jared Kushner, Senior Advisor to the President & Director- Office of American Innovation, is the obvious candidate for United States Special Representative for Cuba given his roles in negotiations relating to Canada, Mexico, Asia and Middle East. President Trump has confidence in him. If Mr. Kushner did not accept the role, he should supervise whoever is appointed.

If not Mr. Kushner, then the individual needs to be highly visible, with a global business background, well-traveled, without substantial connectivity to political parties, political philosophies, and partisan activities; an elder statesperson who will be welcomed in *Havana, Moscow, Beijing, New Delhi, Madrid, Abu Dhabi, and Ankara*. A deal maker. A negotiator. Someone who will have the cellular telephone numbers for The President and for Mr. Kushner.

If resolving the 5,913 certified claims against the Republic of Cuba become a component of discussions with the Republic of Cuba, the United States Special Representative for the Republic of Cuba could be assisted by Mr. Kenneth Feinberg, the Washington DC-based attorney specializing in mediation and alternative dispute resolution, who served as Special Master for the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund and TARP Executive Compensation; Administrator of the BP Deepwater Horizon Disaster Victim Compensation Fund; retained to assist in the General Motors recall response and compensation for Volkswagen owners. Mr. Feinberg appreciates the importance of deadlines and knows how to negotiate settlements. Mr. Feinberg previously confirmed his interest in assisting with settlement negotiations relating to the Republic of Cuba.

Important that two tracks operate simultaneously. One is focused upon the United States-Venezuela bilateral relationship. One is focused upon the United States-Republic of Cuba bilateral relationship.

History

On 23 January 2019, H.E. Juan Guaido, President of National Assembly of Venezuela, assumed the role as Interim President of Venezuela.

On 23 January 2019, from The White House: “Today, I am officially recognizing the President of the Venezuelan National Assembly, Juan Guaido, as the Interim President of Venezuela. In its role as the only legitimate branch of government duly elected by the Venezuelan people, the National Assembly invoked the country’s constitution to declare Nicolas Maduro illegitimate, and the office of the presidency therefore vacant. The people of Venezuela have courageously spoken out against Maduro and his regime and demanded freedom and the rule of law. I will continue to use the full weight of United States economic and diplomatic power to press for the restoration of Venezuelan democracy. We encourage other Western Hemisphere governments to recognize National Assembly President Guaido as the Interim President of Venezuela, and we will work constructively with them in support of his efforts to restore constitutional legitimacy. We continue to hold the illegitimate Maduro regime directly responsible for any threats it may pose to the safety of the Venezuelan people. As Interim President Guaido noted yesterday: “Violence is the usurper’s weapon; we only have one clear action: to remain united and firm for a democratic and free Venezuela.””

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On 25 January 2019, The Honorable Mike Pompeo, United States Secretary of State, appointed The Honorable **Elliott Abrams** as United States Special Representative for Venezuela at the United States Department of State.

The Trump Administration reports that fifty-nine (**59**) countries recognize Interim President Juan Guaido. There are 193-members of the United Nations.

In 2016, the Obama Administration, Diaz-Canel Administration and Maduro Administration did not model for an election outcome other than for a [Hillary] Clinton Administration.

In 2020, every government is modeling for a re-election of President Trump. There is logic for governments engaging or re-engaging with the Trump Administration- and for the Trump Administration to be proactive towards the country it maintains is a key to unlocking solutions for Venezuela: The Republic of Cuba.

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